The Church School Teacher

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THE CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHER

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J. VINCENT NORDGREN
Editor

RAYMOND A. VOGELEY
C. E. LINDER
PAUL M. LINDBERG
HERMAN G. NELSON
Editorial Advisory Committee

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Branch Sunday Schools

By F. E. SCHOENBOHM

DURING this postwar period, in which we are experiencing a critical shortage of pastors, the Branch Sunday School is of inestimable value. It is an effective means of "holding down" a prospective mission field until such time as a permanent missionary may be placed. In the meantime it is bringing the gospel of Christ to many souls who otherwise would not be reached.

There are few congregations which can truthfully say that they have no opportunities to begin branch Sunday schools. They are to be found not only in the expanding suburbs of most of our cities, but in many rural sections as well. Wherever you discover a locality where there are many children who are not attending Sunday school because of the distance involved, or for some other reason, you have a fertile field in which to work. It should not take an active pastor very long to make such discoveries. As he calls on his members and asks questions, he will soon receive the necessary information. Every new section being built up in his city must be kept under surveillance. Each little rural community consisting of a store, school, and a few homes, should get his attention.

Establishing a branch Sunday school is not as difficult as it may appear. Once you have found a good field, secure a meeting place in some suitable building, and select a sufficient number of teachers. Here in Clinton, Iowa, where Zion congregation has started two such branches since 1946, the one meets in a Community Club House and Public Library building. There is a $5.00 rental per Sunday for the use of this building, which the congregation helps the Sunday

school to meet. Though not phenomenal, the growth has been satisfactory. The present enrollment is 56, and the average attendance per Sunday 34 (61%). An intensive effort to gain new pupils is planned for the coming season, and this should increase the number of pupils appreciably.

The other branch Sunday school is in a small rural community about thirteen miles to the northwest. This is a predominantly Lutheran community. Many of the parents belong to the surrounding Lutheran churches but because of the distances (12–15 miles) many of their children do not get to Sunday school regularly. Though previous efforts at founding a Lutheran Sunday school were not very successful, we have hopes that the present Sunday school will continue to operate and that eventually worship services may be inaugurated. When it was organized a few years ago, the first sessions were held in the fire station and jail. At the present time, the only available place is the dance pavilion. Some day soon this group may have its own building. The present enrollment is 40, and the average attendance 36 (90%).

One of the greatest problems is the matter of securing and keeping good teachers. More branch Sunday schools have had to close their doors for this reason than for any other. Because it is very essential that the branch Sunday schools keep in close contact with the mother church and Sunday school, we insist that a certain number of teachers from the home church be active in the branch Sunday school. We have a faithful group of Luther Leaguers who drive out every Sunday to our rural branch. Some of them have had teaching experience before, and others have attended Youth Leadership Training Institutes. On the other hand it is very desirable, also, that some of the teachers live in the district where the branch school is located. We have this arrangement in both our branches. The reasons for it are obvious. We also insist that all teachers from the branch Sunday schools meet regularly with the teachers of the home Sunday school for devotion, instruction, and discussion. We have a superintendent and principal over all three schools, and an assistant superintendent and other officers in each branch Sunday school. During the business meeting, groups meet separately.

The problem of keeping good teachers active over a long period

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Children at the Church Service

EVERY congregation has a margin of members who seldom attend church. In some congregations the margin is wide: perhaps one-half of the membership attends church no more than a dozen times during the year. In other congregations the margin is much smaller, showing that at least eighty per cent are regular church-goers. And yet the fact remains that in every church there are a considerable number that seldom attend the services.

This should not be. The reasons are obvious.

If you go into the history of these non-attending church members you will find that in most cases they never acquired the habit of attending in the days of their childhood and youth. "As the twig is bent, so grows the branch." You can not expect to have a fold of faithful sheep if you do not care for the lambs.

This, too, is obvious.

But what are we to do about it?

Much of the fault lies with the parents. As a rule, indifferent parents bring up a generation of indifferent church members.

To be sure, there are difficulties connected with taking one's children to church. Children often register objection to going, and nearly always they are restless, some more than others, and of course it is natural for them to be so.

But the blessings of the family pew far outweigh the sacrifices to be made in establishing and maintaining it.

A father and mother once told us that they never allowed their boy to be out on the street or playground during the time of the Sunday morning service. "If he is out there," they said, "he will miss church and he will develop the habit of using Sunday morning for recreation. Besides, we want to teach him to respect the preaching of the Word of God. When that is going on in our town, we do not want him to be out on pleasure."

Wise parents! How can we expect to train a generation of church-goers by first letting them develop the habit of using Sunday mornings for recreational purposes?

In a certain home a boy of twelve was objecting to attending church. His father listened to the boy with patience and friendly interest. Then he replied: "Son, as

long as you sit with me at the family table, so long you will also sit with me in the family pew."

Although children's church attendance is largely a matter with which parents have much to do, the Sunday-school teacher can do a great deal to help or hinder the good work.

One of the most important ways of helping or hindering is by the example one sets. When a teacher attends church faithfully he is saying more convincingly than words can tell: "I believe what I am teaching you in class. I feel my need of God, and I mean to seek first His kingdom and His righteousness." On the other hand, when a teacher hurries away from church as soon as Sunday school is out, he is saying to his pupils, "I do not care to put the kingdom of God first in my life. Convenience, comfort, and pleasure come first. The things that we study in the Bible are all right, but we do not need to give them priority."

Which way does your influence go?

Better Teachers?

FROM time to time we have tried to emphasize the value of teacher training. In most cases the people with whom we talk about it readily agree, and then do nothing about the matter.

No school can rise above the level of its teachers. If it is essential that teachers in a public school system measure up to certain set standards, is it not just as important that teachers of the most important subject in all the world measure up to standards that are high? Of course the standards in the two fields are not exactly the same, but standards there should be in both in order that the work for which each is responsible may be done as it should be done.

The Augustana Teacher Training Series is now being revised, after having been used for about a decade. Originally, the series represented considerable co-operation with the Board of Parish Education of the United Lutheran Church. In the revision both this board and that of the American Lutheran Church are co-operating with the corresponding board of the Augustana Synod.

The new plans make provision for a considerable variety of study books on both the elementary and advanced levels. Several specialization courses are also planned.

The older series has been widely used. This is indicated by sales of

textbooks as reported by the publication house. However, many churches have neglected to use the textbooks for systematic study in an accredited course. Because of this, the number of course cards issued for completion of accredited courses has been proportionately low, far below the level of either of the other two Lutheran groups. This is due, we believe, to the failure of our superintendents and pastors to emphasize as they should the value of systematic study. For teachers and prospective teachers simply to attend a course of lectures in which the lecturer does all the work is not a very fruitful way of getting teachers trained for their task.

But there are many bright spots in the picture. A considerable number of churches have followed through in systematic fashion over a period of years and have already seen the results of the program. To see what a difference it makes, let them look at the Sunday school that has never done anything about it. Some time ago a pastor expressed his appreciation for the teacher training courses in words that we pass on to our readers. He wrote: "Your work in this leadership training series is certainly splendid, and over a period of years the results are definitely seen in our congregation here at ———, where the Sunday-school teachers, many of them teachers in the public school, take a great interest in their work and really prepare the children for confirmation and membership in the church. Thank you for this work."

Circulation Increases

Ever since the first issue of THE CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHER came off the press, its subscription list has been growing steadily. Some three years ago the Board of Parish Education of the American Lutheran Church asked to join with us in this publication, and today the number of subscribers has passed the 11,000 mark.

Help us to produce a better magazine. If you have ideas that have worked well in your school, let us hear about them.

J. V. N.

I wish to see the discovery of a plan that would induce nations to settle their disputes, without first cutting one another's throats. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

A Challenging Task

IT is estimated that we have at least 15,000,000 young men and women in the United States who are without any religious affiliation.

Even if the estimate is high, the fact remains that the situation presents the Christian church with a tremendous challenge. Here is an unfinished task of such colossal proportions that one is almost overwhelmed at the thought of it.

How did these young men and women get that way. Undoubtedly many of them attended Sunday school or parochial school when they were children. But somehow they began to drift. Or perhaps they never did get interested. The situation points an accusing finger at the educational work of the church during the past decade or two.

Perhaps it goes farther back than that. Many of the young people who are wholly indifferent to religion today have parents of the same kind. They are preoccupied with other matters. Their children have not only been neglected spiritually, but they have been misled. And most of the blame for both the neglect and misleading must be laid at te door of these parents.

But what has happened to these parents? Many of them were brought up with a church and Sunday-school experience. What is the matter with their early training? Did the church make good use of its opportunity? Did it really try to foster a wholehearted and permanent devotion to the kingdom of God, or was it satisfied simply with putting them through a certain routine that led up to confirmation or "conversion"?

Perhaps we can profit by the mistakes of the past. But we shall never do it by simply looking for mistakes. Better do something and make a few mistakes than not do anything at all. 15,000,000 young men and women in the United States outside the church! They are a challenge. They are not all crying for us to help them; in fact, very few of them are calling for spiritual help. But they do have stifled souls that cry to heaven for a chance to live.

An editorial from May 1937, but still timely. J. V. N.

"And Thou Shalt Teach Them"

By MARIE SHUPE

IT TAKES but a cursory glance at any recent book, current magazine, or other publication directed toward child training—and there are many of them—to see the trend of today's thinking in regard to the pre-school child. In all fields of education, whether secular or religious, more significance is attached to this period of a child's life than ever before. Educators are becoming increasingly aware of the fact that a child's attitudes toward things intellectual are largely set by his parents and his home before he enters school. It is even more true that his attitudes toward things spiritual will also have fallen into a pattern before he attends Sunday school. His life is filled with these attitudes and meanings upon which all his other teachers will have to build.

This is not a new idea. It is, in fact, a very old one, but one which we are beginning to realize must be taken into consideration when any program of education is to be set up. The very foundation on which our church school program must be built is the program it offers to the home. This can be no formal program of instruction for the little ones. But it can and should give parents some specific helps in carrying out their God-given responsibility.

The church is asking, "What can we do to help?" Is the church correct in assuming that young parents feel a need for some such help? We believe it is. It is true that many parents who provide their baby with the care of the best pediatrician available, who want him to have every advantage for his physical, mental, and emotional growth—and we would in no wise minimize the importance of these things — overlook or ignore the most important phase of his growth, his spiritual development. But we believe that thoughtful, conscientious, Christian parents often feel confused and uncertain and inadequate regarding their job of parenthood today, just as they always have, and will welcome their church's efforts at providing them with some directives.

And I repeat, the church wants to help. It wants to reach into homes and minister to the youngest baby there in its attempt to lay the

groundwork for its total program of Christian education. It wants to have its influence felt in setting the pattern for the attitudes which are bound to be developed in the first few years of the child's life. It wants to keep parents ever mindful of the fact of their importance as their child's teachers, and of the danger as well as the opportunity that this involves; danger due to the fact that it is true from both a negative and a positive standpoint.

Our Nursery Roll (Cradle Roll) is the avenue through which the American Lutheran Church hopes to reach all its little ones too young for a Sunday school class. It is the avenue, also, through which it hopes to reach babies in unchurched homes in the vicinities of its congregations. It is the door through which it hopes to gain access to these unchurched homes and to carry into them God's message of the way of salvation. It is the pathway by which it hopes to lead small children to Sunday school when they are of the proper age. It is a means by which it hopes to offer guidance and assistance to parents in the Christian training of their little ones.

The Nursery (or Cradle) Roll's chief function has always been to contact homes through visits and correspondence. Nothing can take the place of these personal contacts. But they are not enough. One of the additional ways by which it may help the parents is by providing for study and discussion group meetings. We are not talking about meetings with so-called experts to teach parents, but meetings where the parents themselves teach each other, by discussing their common problems and by sharing their ideas and experiences in solving these problems. Nor do we mean a parent organization such as are found in too many public schools whereby the parents are lined up to support the school. Rather, we mean one in which the church and Sunday school, by providing tools and materials and by training leaders, can assist parents in their responsibility as Christian teachers. The best any Sunday school can hope to do is to guide the teaching that goes on at home and then supplement that teaching for a brief period one day a week.

The Board of Parish Education of the American Lutheran Church has prepared a handbook on the organization and function of the Nursery Roll, and also material for both leaders and parents for

discussion meetings. These are now available and more will be written from time to time.

The church is acutely aware of its responsibility to little children, for surely they are included in Matthew 28. 19–20. "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." If the church and home are to share in this responsibility to children, they must plan together, work together, pray together. There must be a common ground on which church and home will co-operate and unite their efforts toward bringing them up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

The words that Moses spoke to his people in Deuteronomy 6. 6–7 give to parents today a clear conception of what God expects of them. It is, indeed, a serious responsibility and leaves no doubt in their minds that they *should teach* their children, and teach them all the time; morning, evening, working, resting, every day and everywhere. Teach them what? One can teach only the things that are in his heart. With the Word of God in the parents' hearts, the Word which they love, and which gives them hope, and joy, and peace, the home will inevitably become the center of instruction in that Word. "Thou shalt teach them" *is* a God-given responsibility, but it can become more than that, it *can* be an opportunity and a privilege.

The Children's Choir

By CORNELIA RAMME

Note: The Zion Church School of Idaho Springs, Colorado, was reorganized the latter part of February 1947, after a lapse of fifteen years with no sessions of the church school. Eleven pupils enrolled at this reorganization meeting. For the past twenty-six years this parish has not been served by a regular resident pastor. However, the parish has not been neglected during those twenty-six years, but has been ministered to by neighboring Augustana Lutheran pastors. Even though it was only possible sometimes for a vice-pastor to conduct seven or eight Sunday afternoon serv-

ices throughout a year, the members of the congregation continued together in the hopes of securing a resident pastor. These hopes were realized when Pastor and Mrs. C. L. Rammé of the American Lutheran Church were called to minister to the Zion Lutheran Church and arrived on this field in the early part of 1947.

While touring the Colorado District last fall, pastors and members of the other congregations in that district remarked about the fine children's choir they had been privileged to hear at a district meeting held in the Zion Lutheran Church in Idaho Springs.

During my visit to the Zion parish, I also learned that their children's choir had participated in the local parade of Gold Rush Days. The children's choir appeared in a float depicting the Little Brown Church in the Wildwood and won second place with a cash prize of twenty-five dollars.

Judging, then, from what I saw and heard, I realized that some outstanding training and experiences are being given this children's choir of the Zion Lutheran Church School in Idaho Springs. Noticeable, too, are the facts that from a revived church school an active children's choir has made it possible for these children to receive musical training and appreciation of worship through song, as well as an opportunity to serve and dedicate their talents by enhancing the beauty of worship in song. I therefore asked Mrs. Cornelia Rammé, the pastor's wife and the leader of this children's choir, to share her experiences and suggestions whereby other church schools might be encouraged and benefited. You will note that Mrs. Rammé has and is providing a continuous, on-going program of activities throughout the church year. GERTRUDE HILL, *Field Worker.*

A CHURCH SCHOOL that does not have a children's choir lacks one of the most valuable helps in teaching the Christian Way of Life.

The Zion Lutheran Children's Choir was organized the tenth of March 1947 with five girls and one boy coming in response to my first invitation. Easter was approaching, so we began learning some of the Easter hymns with the thought in mind of presenting a short program of hymns and recitations for the church school hour. We had three rehearsals a week. In a short time we had eleven girls and boys who memorized five Easter hymns, which they sang nicely at our church school Easter service.

The first appearance and the inspiration they brought gave the children a satisfaction of having been of service to their church school. At the rehearsals the fact was stressed that the church and the church school needed their voices to sing the story of the Resurrection.

We provided a little party, Sunday after Easter, which pleased the children very much.

At the next rehearsal, I suggested that they sing a song for Mother's Day at the church service. They eagerly agreed to come three times a week. Some new voices were added until there were nineteen in the group which prepared the number for Mother's Day. Some of the voices were almost hopeless from a musical standpoint, but the children were eager to learn and so were given fundamental ear training which helped them to become melody-conscious. The Mother's Day song was sung sincerely. As they had advanced greatly in the appreciation of the words of love and devotion to their mothers, their voices responded with beautiful tones as well.

For several weeks we practiced once a week, stressing attack and release, diction, rhythm and ear training. We always used hymn phrases to accomplish the desired results.

Children's interest soon wanes if there is not an event of some importance which serves as a goal of accomplishment. While I was trying to think of an incentive to get robes for our children, I recalled the appeal that had been made in our local paper for floats to participate in the parade of Gold Rush Days. The happy thought occurred to me of building a float depicting the Little Brown Church in the Wildwood, robing the children's choir, seating them to show the interior of a church and having them sing appropriate songs. The idea appealed greatly to the children. The members of our Ladies Auxiliary were happy to make the collars, ties and muslin squares for the robes. The children practiced diligently, memorizing *The Little Brown Church in the Vale, Russian Vesper Hymn,* and two stanzas of *Onward, Christian Soldiers.* The whole project turned out to be a wonderful co-operative effort for the whole congregation. The men, under the supervision of Pastor Rammé, built a beautiful float of a log-cabin church. The children were very sweet in their robes and sang reverently in spite of the cheering all along the route of the parade. Twenty-two were in this group, all enrolled in our church school.

Following this project, the children's choir received further training in the vacation church school. I endeavored to help them realize the value of music in worship; the

different types of hymns: praise, prayer and adoration; and, also, the value of the gospel hymn with its person-to-person appeal. To develop further their understanding of the words, we used interesting stories which prompted the writing of many of our hymns, and chalk talks by the pastor in the interpretation of the hymns. All of this made quite an impression upon the children.

During the remainder of the summer, the attendance was somewhat irregular, as might be expected because of vacation trips. However, there were two rehearsals a week and those who came were given a real workout.

In the fall when the Colorado District convened here, the children's choir sang to an appreciative audience of pastors and lay delegates.

This fall a new group of girls and boys, whom we had succeeded in enrolling in our church school, responded wholeheartedly to the opportunities of singing in the children's choir. I divided the children's choir into two groups—younger and older children—for rehearsals. This took additional time but was well worth the extra effort.

A beautiful service of Christmas music was presented by the children's choir on the Sunday evening preceding Christmas. For the Christmas Eve Service, I combined the older pupils in the children's choir with the Senior Choir. Incidentally, the training received in the children's choir provides more and better qualified members to be promoted into the senior choir.

We have planned a special service of music for Palm Sunday and another song service for a glorious Easter Day.

Our children's choir has now grown to a membership of thirty-two, all enrolled in our church school. My plan is to use these children whenever their preparation warrants an offering of music in worship.

It is my personal conviction that it is useless to organize a children's choir unless there is a leader who can plan an interesting, meaningful, continuous program for the group. The possibilities and opportunities for a blessed ministry of teaching the Christian Way of Life, through the medium of music, have impressed us greatly, and the results have contributed largely to the success of this first year of our church school.

Primary Enrichment Helps

By DOROTHY HAAS

Primary I. Third Quarter

UNIT B

IN the first two lessons of Unit B the children have learned from whom we receive our rules for happy living and why it is necessary for us to have such guides. The lessons for May present specific ways in which children can apply these rules to their everyday living. Children should be given opportunities to work together in Sunday school. Teachers may then observe them in their actions and may be very helpful in curing some undesirable traits and to developing desirable ones. The duties of the Sunday school teacher are many and varied. She must be wide awake and alert at all times to meet the needs of the little souls with whom she has been privileged to work.

Use Lesson 5 through Lesson 9 to prepare for the future Lesson 10, "Worship at Home." Let us take nothing for granted when we think of the family altar. We may be surprised when we inquire as to how many families have daily family worship. There are families who will not know what one means when the family altar is mentioned. Here is another opportunity for us to carry over the Sunday school teaching throughout the week. Then, too, the child will not be the only recipient of spiritual food, but the entire family. The teacher should be tactful about gathering information concerning what is done in the home as to family worship. Children are more sensitive than we sometimes realize and are often embarrassed by too many questions before the entire class group. After one is quite certain that some effort is being put forth in the home for meditation, then encourage the child to tell the class about their family altar. Why not put forth every effort to carry out this aim, "A Family Altar for Every Home."

One Sunday the worship service in Sunday school could develop a family worship program. The superintendent may pretend that he (she) is the father (mother) and the pupils are the children.

A question asked many times concerning family worship is, "What should we do for such a

service?" Why not take the time to plan a full week's program, have it mimeographed, and supply each child with a copy. The teachers of the primary department may have a staff meeting and plan these devotions. Call in your pastor. I am certain that he will be very happy to assist in such a worth-while project. He realizes that the spiritual life of the church can not rise above the level of the spiritual life of the home. Additional material is also available from the Board of Parish Education.

A very helpful book in planning devotional services for children of primary department age is "Two Minutes with God" by Paul J. Hoh and Philip R. Hoh. It contains very meaningful meditations for Unit B. Such headings as Friends, School, Play, Work, Love, Kindness, Helpfulness, Obedience, Duty, and others could be used with the Sunday lessons for this unit about "Rules for Happy Living." A Bible verse followed by a short meditation and prayer should prove helpful to the children and at the same time be of some value to older members of the family. A collection of devotional books may be made and material used from a different one each week, informing the parents as to the name of book, price, and where it can be bought. Such suggestions are often welcomed by the home. "At Jesus' Feet" by Schramm, "God in Our Home" by D. Nystrom, "And Then I Pray, Goodnight" by Henseler are a few good books of this kind.

Teachers will note that on the back of the leaflets in the section "When You Go Home" there is always a suggestion to the parents for at least one Bible reading. Make use of these readings in preparing the devotions, for this will be a fine way to review the story taught in Sunday school. The Bible verse could be used as a theme verse and if repeated once each day of the week that verse should, by the last day of the week, have been memorized and taken on new meaning.

On the Sunday when the lesson on "Worship at Home" will be taught it may be a good plan to have a real home scene with dramatization by the children. This could be a class project with each group planning a short service or the entire department could arrange for it. Why not make this a "Family Sunday" and invite the parents to attend Sunday school. The children could present the

worship service as a part of the opening session, then the parents could be invited to attend the adult class. If there is not such a class, find someone to teach this group that morning. This might be the beginning of a class of this kind or might serve to interest more in attending an already organized adult group.

Also use these lessons to assist and encourage our pupils to write their own prayers. There are too many in the church today who rely mainly on memorized prayers. We do not wish to discourage entirely the use of such prayers, but we want to teach our little ones to talk with their heavenly Father as freely as they speak to their earthly father.

The children may enjoy making a scrapbook about "Rules for Happy Living." If they are on the lookout for pictures illustrating Jesus' teachings they will need to recall them in so doing. This will serve as a review.

All these rules are so beautifully illustrated with Bible stories that additional Biblical material is not needed. If the teacher uses the stories as given she will find plenty to teach. May we keep in mind these words, "Better *well* taught than *much* taught." The Teacher's Guide has supplementary stories of the practical kind which should also be used to bring the Biblical material nearer to the children's experiences.

A final suggestion to teachers comes in these words: "Don't be late, be *early* to Sunday school." We can not place too much emphasis on the pre-session period. Are you there to greet your first pupil? Do you have anything planned to busy the early comers? All such preparations do require time, precious time, but anything that is worth doing at all is worth doing well. We can always find time to do the things we want to do.

"Victory belongs to the most persevering." NAPOLEON.

Don't make excuses! Make good. ELBERT HUBBARD.

The Junior in Church

By ELLATINE B. SCHULZ

THE JUNIOR asks, "Who started the church?" "Why do people go to church on Sunday?" "What do they do there?" "What does the pastor do?" "Why?" To find his answers, you as his teacher must help him to grow in love for his Saviour and his church and to take part in its life and work with joy. After studying the lesson in Sunday school the junior will learn by practical experience some important things about the Lutheran Church when the class attends the chief service of the church each Sunday. Many opportunities for co-operation between the Sunday school, the church, and the home are suggested. The parents should be encouraged to help the junior with his homework, activities, and discussions and to attend church with him.

Before you teach this quarter read both the Study Book and the Teacher's Guide to get an overall picture of the course. If there are other junior teachers in your school, meet with them as a group to discuss the materials and methods to be used and how to accomplish the desired outcomes as listed on page 4 of the Teachers' Guide. Discover how all the stories fit into the plan of the quarter and how the junior may apply them in his daily living to grow in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

To teach this course successfully the teacher must spend time in preparation for each class period. When should this preparation start? Start on Sunday to prepare the next Sunday's lesson. Each day of the week remember to pray for God's guidance in your work. Pray for your class. Make use of the prayer on page 10 in the Teacher's Guide. As you prepare, as well as during the class session, keep the definite aims for each lesson uppermost in your mind. After you study each section in the Study Book read the corresponding section in the Teacher's Guide. Use your Bible, Bible dictionary, the suggested references for each lesson. Learn the memory selections. Adapt the suggested plan to meet the needs and conditions of your particular school and class. Think of the individuals in your group and personalize your teaching. List

the songs, prayers, pictures, and objects needed for class and gather them together before Sunday. Above all realize the opportunities you have to lead others in spiritual growth by your faith and consecration to the Lord Jesus. Christianity is often "caught" from a consecrated teacher.

A narrative is placed at the beginning of each lesson for the junior to read while the class is assembling. The sole purpose of this section is to make the junior aware of the problem involved. Since the junior is expected to attend the church service, many of the symbols found in churches are illustrated and described in the text. Ask your pastor or someone who has made a study of church symbolism to explain those in your church. Lead the junior to understand that the symbols which he sees in churches are really a code language which helps the Christian to remember the church's message. "Reading the Bible at Home" and "Something to Do This Week" are suggestions which encourage the weekly co-operation of the home.

Arouse the interest of the junior in the pre-session period by a variety of activities. Make use of this time to learn to know your class better and to prepare the juniors' minds and hearts for the day's program.

Since March 28th, the last Sunday in the second quarter, was Easter Day and an Easter lesson was included in that quarter, the cless is already familiar with the facts of the resurrection of Jesus. Perhaps an interesting way to emphasize the aims of the Lesson 1 would be to use slides of the Easter Story. If slides are not available, review the story by using the flannelgraph or pictures. Be sure to stress the fact that we attend church on Sunday to express our gratitude to Christ because we remember that He arose from the dead on the first day of the week and won the victory for us.

Before this session prepare a Church Attendance Record Book so that the class may see the finished product. Explain that some of the pages should be blank for the present. Illustrate with your model booklet how the class is to use this record. Announce that the booklets will be displayed at the end of the quarter. The junior will now have a reason to keep an attractive and informative record. As a class project keep a Church Attendance Record on the blackboard or on large sheets of paper.

Select several juniors to fill in the spaces each week during the pre-session period.

Several weeks before you teach Lesson 2 arrange with the pastor, if his duties permit, to come into your class at a definite time. Explain the aims of this lesson to him. Show him the section "Pastors Today" and ask him to speak for a few minutes about his work. Introduce the pastor to the juniors in a manner that will encourage respect and love.

Are you sure which form of the Catechism you are to use for your memory work? It is best to consult the pastor so that the class will not be confused with two versions. If more time is needed, either for the Bible Study or memory work, the activity "What Are the Reasons?" may be completed at home. Suggest that the junior discuss this section with his parents.

Use pictures to help the juniors visualize the dramatic scenes in Lesson 3. Lead to the following conclusions: that the sermon is God's message to His people; that the Holy Spirit helps the pastor to declare God's Word; that the Holy Spirit helps us to know God's will and to live Christian lives today.

Does this lesson make you aware of the importance of memory work? A mind full of God's truth is fertile soil for the Holy Spirit. The junior can be taught to memorize and can have fun while learning. If the words are defined, and if the passage is explained and understood, it is much easier to memorize. Memorize the selections as "whole." Arouse interest by new ways of approach. Repetition is essential. Be sure to use what has been memorized in a worship period or at the closing session.

By now the junior has had several opportunities to experience the reverence of the congregation at worship. In the discussion of Lesson 4 stress the proper attitude of the sincere and humble Christian in God's house. If necessary (for the nine-year-old) type or mimeograph "The Prayer upon Entering the Pew" and "The Prayer upon Leaving the Pew."

Lesson 5 answers many "whys" about which the junior is wondering. It also affords an excellent opportunity to seek the co-operation of the parents. If you succeed in getting the parents interested in the Sunday school and church, you will help your church move forward in providing more Christian training for the junior.

As an aid for this lesson borrow

a copy of "An Explanation of the Common Service" from your pastor. It will help you to explain the church service in a simple manner.

The week before you teach Lesson 6 inform your class of the treat in store for them when they will meet with the organist (or pianist) to examine the organ and talk with him about church music. Are you ready to help your class to appreciate the beautiful music of the Christian church? Can you provide opportunities for your class to express their Christian faith by praising God in song or with musical instruments in church or Sunday school? Will you encourage those who can neither sing nor play to listen reverently or to help repair hymnals, or to make a musical scrapbook for the junior choir or some department in the Sunday school? Challenge your class to grow in grace and in the knowledge and service of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Before and After Confirmation"

By WILSON C. EGBERT

EACH new quarterly is a challenge to do a better job of teaching than we have done before. Apart from the lesson by lesson preparation, a teacher ought to do three things to make teaching more effective:

1. Read the entire pupil's Study Book.

2. Read the entire Teacher's Guide.

3. Analyze the message of the whole quarter.

Suppose we analyze the quarter before us. Reading the two texts will bring out the following characteristics of the quarter:

1. The general aim of the quarter is to cultivate a spirit of enthusiasm about confirmation and its meaning for our pupils. During the course of the quarter, every one of the Desired Outcomes listed on page four of the Teacher's Guide will be touched upon.

2. The quarterly deals with an experience which the class has had recently or will soon have, that of confirmation instruction and the rite of confirmation.

3. The Biblical material provided varies in quantity, and in some cases choices will need to be made if class time is short.

4. Each unit closes with a lesson of personal application and interest. Each unit tries to reinforce the pupil's decision to serve Christ.

5. Some of the later lessons call for the appearance of adult leaders of the congregation. To each of these people the teacher should give a copy of the pupil's book, a week or so before appearance in class. If the leaders know what the class is trying to accomplish, their own contribution will mean more.

There are of course specific devices and helps which have been found useful. I would like to share some of these suggestions with you in the hope that your own teaching might be made easier.

1. Use a blackboard. Even when classes meet in church pews a blackboard can be used. A portable easel and blackboard can be set up without much difficulty and removed after the need for it has passed. I found it helpful to have the writing done before the beginning of Sunday school. New words in the lesson, as for instance in the section, "Words to Keep in Mind," may be written on the board. The definitions secured from class discussion should be compared with the definitions appearing in the pupil's book. Certain of the exercises may be worked out on the board, rather than individually in the pupil's book. In Lesson 1, page 9, the exercise on the meaning of baptism is an example.

2. The review of catechism portions, and of Biblical information, seems to mean more when woven into the class discussion than when carried as a separate exercise. I have found it useful to have the pupils "tell me about it," as though I were a stranger to the church. Similar reviewing can be done with the new words the children will be learning.

3. Since teaching time varies from brief to fairly extensive periods, and since classes vary in size and progress in the pastor's confirmation class, I have found it helpful to emphasize the portions of the lesson that my own class needed. Where teaching time is short, the following emphasis on one statement of the teaching aim will be helpful. While one concentrates upon this aim, the other statements of aim should not be forgotten.

Lesson 1—Aim 2; Lesson 2—

Aim 2; Lesson 3—Aim 2; Lesson —Aim 2; Lesson 5—Aim 1.

Lesson 6—Selection depends upon the class situation. If the group as been confirmed—Aim 2. If the roup has not been confirmed—Aim 1.

Lesson 7—Introduce lesson with ral review, spend most of the class eriod on Aim 2, and urge the upils to finish the lesson at home.

Lesson 8—Aim 1; Lesson 9—Aim 3; Lesson 10—Aims 1 and 3; Lesson 11—Aims 2 and 4; Lesson 2—Aim 2.

Lesson 13—No matter how brief our class period, this lesson will eed a development of all three tatements of the aim.

When teaching classes where a eriod of 30–35 minutes was avail-ble, I attempted a more complete evelopment of the lesson, omit-ing *extensive* drill on the word ist and catechism portions. I found nison recitation of the catechism ortions effective and a good time aver. In those cases, however, the atechism was also woven into the esson development. Limited time nd space may prohibit the use of rojects in class, but meetings dur-ng the week may make occasional rojects possible.

The teacher who has a forty r forty-five minute period may not only make use of the entire lesson, but may also weave into the class period some of the "homework" that is suggested. Visual aids for this quarter are limited pretty largely to inspirational materials. The slides mentioned may be used in the class session or for worship. Where the group can not have its own worship services, it may still be possible to plan the Sunday school's program on a rotating basis. Intermediates may alternate with another department or take their turn in providing the worship program for the school.

While we are cutting the amount of material we wish to present to fit the lesson period, we should not fail to keep these two factors in mind:

1. If the period can be lengthened by the omission of needless announcements, confusion, and the like, we ought to do our part to lengthen it. Class members can take the offering or the roll. Sunday school papers, church bulletins, and similar items can be distributed at the door.

2. It may be a constant source of irritation not to be able to finish the lesson, but it is a sin against the child and the school to "finish it off" ten minutes before the close of the class.

Youth's World

By J. R. BROKHOFF

YOUTH'S WORLD is a new quarter of the "Christian Growth Series," edited and published by the United Lutheran Church, the American Lutheran Church, and the Augustana Synod. The course, originally scheduled to appear as the first quarter of the second year, will be used this April as the third quarter of the first year by the Senior Departments of our Sunday schools.

The course was written with the thought in mind that young people like to dream. For thirteen weeks they will be asked to dream of "Youth's World." We do not dream of things as they are but as we want them to be. Since the conditions of our world are far from satisfactory, the world needs the dreams of its youth.

The Importance of Dreams

To dream is no insignificant thing, for we eventually become what we dream. There is a legend about a hunchback prince who was deeply ashamed of his physical condition. He wanted to be able to stand straight and dignified. One day, it is said, he had a sculptor make a statue of himself not as he was but as he wanted to be. Then he placed the statue in his private garden. It was his daily custom to go to the garden secretly and stand before the statue. As he looked at it, he would draw himself up and try to be like the man of the statue. Many weeks later he looked at himself in a full-length mirror. To his amazement he found that he had become just like his statue! It will be the task of the teacher of this course to present to the young people the Christian ideal for our world and to challenge them to make their world conform to the ideal.

These dreams are not only our dreams. Surely they are God's dreams, too. God would have His will done on earth and He would have His Kingdom established upon earth. This could be done in our generation of we had the courage and willingness to obey His commands and to do His will. Throughout the course, the teacher will do well to keep in mind and to read to the class at the beginning of each unit the following

poem, "God's Dreams," by Thomas Curtis Clark:

Dreams are they—but they are God's dreams!
Shall we decry them and scorn them?
That men shall love one another,
That white shall call black man brother,
That greed shall pass from the market place.
That lust shall yield to love for the race,
That man shall meet with God face to face—
Dreams are they all,
But shall we despise them—
God's dreams!

Dreams are they—to become man's dreams!
Can we say nay as they claim us?
That men shall cease from their hating,
That war shall soon be abating,
That the glory of kings and lords shall pale,
That the pride of dominion and power shall fail,
That the love of humanity shall prevail—
Dreams are they all,
But shall we despise them—
God's dreams!

The Table of Contents

The Quarter consists of four units. Unit A considers the theme, "Investing a Life" under the lesson subjects: (1) Go to School or Go to Work"; (2) "One's Lifework for Self and Man"; (3) "One's Lifework for God and Man." Unit B turns to "My Country." Under this theme the students are to consider: (1) "What Do We Owe Our Country?"; (2) "Christ as the Saviour of a Nation"; (3) "Americans All!—or Not?" "Whose World?" is the title of Unit C. Following somewhat the same line of thought but on a world-wide scale, the subjects are: (1) "What Does Our Country Owe the World?"; (2) "Christ as the Saviour of the World of Nations"; (3) "Missions as a Christian International Opportunity"; (4) Must We Always Have Wars?" Our Christian faith and its enemies are studied in Unit D: (1) "Physical Science and Man's Accomplishments"; (2) "Rubber-Stamp Humanity"; (3) "The Worst Enemy of All" (Indifference). A study of the table of contents will show the teacher that the course covers a "world" of subject matter: the youth's personal life, his nation, his world, and his religion. The difficulty will be in finding sufficient time to cover the material in the Study Book. A minimum of thirty minutes for the class session will be required to do justice to the subject matter.

How much of this course will

your class remember? It depends upon the teaching method you use. Psychologists say that children remember 10% of all they hear, 50% of all they see, 70% of all they say, and 90% of all they do. According to these figures, the least effective method is to lecture. Yet lecturing is the most popular method with many teachers, probably because it is the easiest. In conformity with these statistics and effectiveness with young people this quarter does not use the lecture method. The teacher is hereby challenged to make the additional preparation demanded by other methods.

Visual Aids

If our students remember 50% of all they see, we shall be wise to use visual aids to the fullest extent. Moving pictures, slides, and slide-films are aids to teaching—aids and no more. Never must they be used with the idea that they will take the place of the lesson or excuse the teacher from preparation of a lesson. They are not meant to provide an entertaining program. The visual aid used should be closely integrated with the lesson material to promote the aims of the lesson. In the Teacher's Guide of this course the teacher will find suggested visual aids.

"Youth's World" has been prepared with the view of the teacher as a discussion leader. The Study Book, it must be remembered, is a manual for study and work. This learning process is to take place in the classroom. Homework is optional and extra. A discussion leader teaches by letting the pupils teach themselves through directed thinking. The discussion leader-teacher will provoke their thought and participation by giving stimulating questions and thoughts which are suggested in the Teacher's Guide. A complete lesson plan for each lesson with suggested class procedure and detailed suggestions for conducting the discussion will be found in the Guide. It is always necessary to emphasize the fact that every discussion should be brought to a satisfactory conclusion. Without it, confusion of thought will be in the minds of the young people.

Learn by Doing

The most effective method is learning by doing. To work one must have materials. Each member of the class needs his own copy of the Study Book. Each needs a pencil, preferably a pen. A copy of the Bible is essential for each student. There is a temptation to skip the work projects in the Study Book.

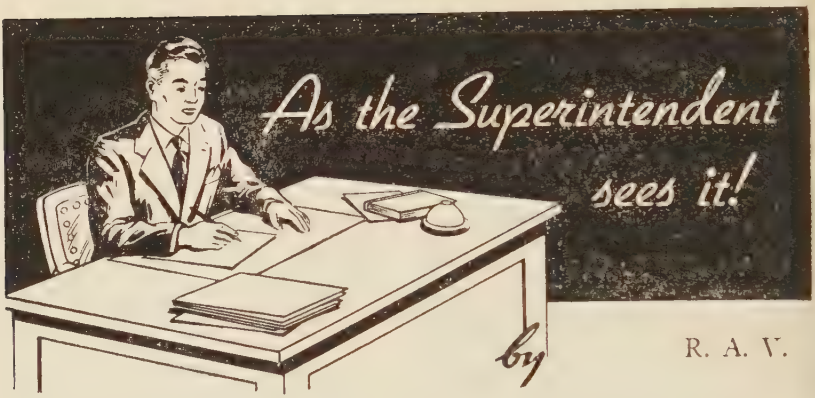
Since we remember 90% of all that we do, the teacher will readily understand the folly of bypassing the activity material.

The Sunday school session is primarily a Bible study hour. In keeping with this fact, the lessons of the quarter are Bible-based. The Scripture passages have been made the heart of the lesson. The passages give the principles for a better world. The teacher needs to impress the class with the importance of the Bible by giving continuous emphasis and time to the Bible references.

The Teacher's Guide, the student's Study Book, and the Bible are the only essential source materials for teaching this course. Yet other materials will be helpful. During the thirteen weeks of the course, the teacher will do well to read the daily newspapers and magazines such as *Time* and *Life* in order that the teacher may keep up-to-date in current events and select up-to-the-minute illustrative material for inclusion in the lessons. The following books will give background material: "Toward a Better World," edited by William Scarlett; "Understanding Youth" by Roy A. Burkhart; "Preparation for What?" by Paul W. Dieckman; "Man and Society in the New Testament" by E. F. Scott.

It Depends on You

Will this course be a success? It all depends upon the teacher. The lesson material in itself is as cold and formal as the print. The material, to be beneficial, must be translated through the personality of the teacher. The personality is the deciding factor! Enthusiasm, attractiveness, eagerness, and consecration in the teacher will make the lesson material glow with a divine spirit. Consider it a privilege to teach. Realize the importance of the task to mold the minds and lives of young people. Always come to the class thoroughly prepared. Consider yourself Christ's representative. Now, let's begin!



IN the corner this month is the assistant superintendent for the American Lutheran Church Sunday Schools, who is concerned that so little continuous help is provided for our many superintendents. Your board is working on definite assignments.

A newly elected superintendent asks for suggestions so that he may fulfill the obligations his congregation has placed upon him. In addition to the general material on the work of the Sunday school, I suggest several books.

Recently I read "Sunday School Officers and Their Work" by Arthur Flake. Although Dr. Flake, one of the outstanding leaders of Christian education in the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, wrote this book twenty years ago, it emphasizes helpfully many phases of a superintendent's work today and also gives suggestions about other officers in the school.

Two other books are listed for superintendents. "The Church School Superintendent" by Philip Cowell Jones and "The Superintendent" by Frank L. Brown.

Studying these books will stimulate your own thinking. You may no longer try to do some of the things that others should do for you in your school. You may discover certain areas of work which are yours but about which you have done very little planning.

April Showers

If you have not studied the gains and losses in your Sunday school, why not summarize your 1946 reports? Your enrollment should be higher this year. What department has had the highest gain? Why?

Have you maintained close contact with all the new prospects enrolled last fall? How many new families affiliated with your church during Lent? Are all members also enrolled in the Sunday school? Are the newly received communicants continuing to study God's Word and work in an Adult Class? How have you followed up the inactive pupils or those who because of sickness or bad conditions were absent quite frequently during the winter? If the interest and attendance has lowered in one class, have you investigated the reasons? Perhaps the teacher is in the wrong department! Perhaps the room can be made more attractive! Are you following the lessons prepared for that age?

In many sections of our church the post-Easter season brings peak attendance. This period of the year is another excellent time to deepen the spirit of evangelism in every pupil. This spirit begins with the pastor and superintendent. Each teacher must carry it to every pupil. Nothing can take the place of personal calls, personal invitations.

April showers like this will bring new life into any Sunday school.

THE CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHER would also like to receive showers of suggestions in April from you. What topics or problems would you like to have presented in this "Corner" in future issues? Send them in to the editors.

Using the Blackboard

I RAN across this idea in my reading and believe it might be a good one to try. The presentation of a number of Bible references can be done to good effect by this unusual method. The class is asked to read the first reference silently. Then one member of the group writes on the blackboard all the thoughts that the class can recall from its reading. The text is then checked briefly to make sure no important contribution of the text has been missed. Other texts are similarly handled.

By way of variation, a brief discussion of the lesson topic is followed by the assignment of particular passages to individuals or groups. As soon as the silent reading has been done, the group adds up on the blackboard all that the readings for the day have to say about the topic. If time permits, the texts may be restudied for new light on the discussion. Purposeful Bible reading and study has both merit and rich reward.

WILSON EGBERT

Is Your Nose in Your Teacher's Book?

WE teachers need help, lots of help. That's the reason for teacher's quarterlies, commentaries and the like. Yet there's a danger in such helps, too. We may not tell the class, but our actions say, "Just wait till I look up the answer." If the teacher uses the pupil's quarterly and the Bible in the actual teaching situation, two benefits result. The teacher "is with the class" in the study of the lesson, and any appeal to higher authority is carried to the Bible. It may be necessary to use bookmarks in your Bible to be able to refer to lesson text material quickly. It may even be necessary to say, "I don't know the answer now, but I'll look it up and report to you next week." Neither admission of our limitations is damaging. Too close a use of the Teacher's Guide during the lesson presentation may cause us to miss the class with even the best of theoretical lessons.

WILSON EGBERT

Activities in the Field of Christian Education

By I. O. NOTHSTEIN

Enlistment Demonstrations. The United Lutheran Church in America is planning to hold Sunday school enlistment demonstrations this year in enough places in the United States and Canada to reach about half of its congregations. This is the year in which it is hoped to reach and, if possible, surpass the goal set three years ago.

* * *

Reaching Out by Denver Lutherans. Last summer, when the Bible schools, which the Denver, Colo., Lutheran congregations of the Missouri Synod conducted, had completed their programs, the teachers of these schools were pooled for a similar project among the 150 Protestant children at the Colorado State School for Dependent Children. The term lasted two weeks, and the children received the benefit of the finest instructional material and visual aids. Authorities at the State Home expressed great appreciation for the quality of the program, the first ever offered there by any denomination. The Lutheran Insti-

utional Ministry of Denver conducts Sunday school classes at the Home the year round.

* * *

California Lutherans Favor Christian Day Schools. The latest Christian day schools to be organized in Los Angeles are those of the First and of St. Matthew's Churches, both belonging to the U. L. C. A. Besides those belonging to the Missouri Synod, there are now eight Lutheran day schools in the Los Angeles area, all belonging to National Lutheran Council churches. A teachers' conference of the eight schools, the first of its kind, was recently held in the schoolrooms of Peace Chapel, belonging to the American Lutheran Church.

A Methodist bishop, the Rev. Charles S. Selecman of Dallas, Texas, recently told a group of Methodist clergymen assembled at Louisville, Ky., that "the time has come to establish parochial schools." Charging that the public schools of America have drifted "far away from moral and spiritual teachings," the Texas bishop insisted that the church must meet the situation by the establishment of schools of its own. He also urged parents to rededicate themselves to the task of teaching their children Christian principles in order to save the home, which he described as "the foundation of just about everything that is worthwhile in the world."

* * *

The Sunday school by mail, conducted by Miss Eleanore Gillstrom, educational missionary of the U. L. C. A. for Western Canada, from Saskatoon, Sask., has doubled its enrollment during the past year, and is now in need of more office help. Gifts for the project have come from many parts of the church.

* * *

Advanced Training Schools. The American Lutheran Church is planning to hold advanced leadership training schools in each of its thirteen districts next summer. These schools are intended for youth who have attended the regular training schools and are nineteen years of age or over.

Patterned after the "Boys' States" conducted by several states, in which select groups operate miniature state governments, the advanced leadership training schools will break down the total enrollment into church councils, floor committees, and conventions. In these circles youth, under the direction of one of their own chair-

men, will work from prepared agenda on the various phases of the church's activity. Various problems will be put to the youth and they will be asked to do such things as preparing local congregational budgets, discussing problems of the Sunday school, youth work, home and foreign missions, etc. Immediately following the session in which a group meets as a church council it will meet as a congregation; and following the session in which a group meets as a floor committee it will meet as a district or a church convention. In these smaller groups the various recommendations will be heard and discussed, and finally the whole group will arrive at answers to the various problems presented. There will also be visits and lectures by the synod's leaders who will act as the faculties and advisors. About 2,000 young people are expected to attend the training schools.

* * *

Honorable Mention. Mr. Frank E. Frey, retired superintendent, and Mrs. Henry Kahrs, assistant superintendent of the Sunday school of St. Peter's Lutheran Church (U. L. C. A.), Plainfield, N. J., were honored recently for 25 years of continuous service to the school, at a special dinner given by the church. Mr. Frey had not been absent a single Sunday since 1922.

A beauty-contest winner of unusual character is Miss Barbara Jo Walker, 21-year-old Sunday school teacher of Memphis, Tenn., who won the title of Miss America, 1947, at the Atlantic City finals last September. This young woman, who has refused to capitalize on her physical beauty, stated to newspaper reporters at a recent church convention, that her chief interest is teaching her Sunday school class in a Methodist church in Memphis, Tenn.

Branch Sunday Schools

From page 2

of time is one that must be approached prayerfully. After all is said and done only the Holy Spirit can move teachers to give unselfishly of their time and talents to this work. Only when the pastor and other faithful workers carry this matter to the throne of grace, will willing teachers be found. When the preaching of the Word has succeeded in creating a burning desire within the souls of church members for the unsaved and unchurched, will missionary work be done and the Lord's kingdom built.

BOOKS

A Bible History. By J. Vincent Nordgren. Augustana Book Concern. 212 pages. $1.50.

Many have asked if the American Lutheran Church planned to issue a new Bible History. I always gave a negative answer because I knew that Dr. Nordgren was editing a new one. Augustana Book Concern has issued it.

This new Bible History is one of Dr. Nordgren's many fine contributions to his synod while serving as its Executive Director of Parish Education. It is a product of rich experience, excellent judgment and devoted love.

The first sentences in the introductory unit, "The Bible," give the spirit of the book. "No other book means so much to Christian people as the Bible. This is because this sacred Book speaks to people about the thing that matters most in all the world: their life with God."

Part One presents the history of the Bible and God's work with and for man from "The Beginnings" to the "Return from Captivity." Wherever possible the text is taken directly from the Bible. The necessary continuity is well written. Two units, "The Prophets" and "Wisdom and Devotional Writings," complete the Old Testament presentation.

The Appendix to Part One deals with the inter-testament period, which so frequently is a blind spot in our knowledge.

Part Two develops fully the life and work of Jesus. The Revised Standard Version is the basis for most New Testament quotations. "The Beginning of the Christian Church" is outlined and attention directed to the missionary work of the early followers of Jesus as well as to the Epistles. A "Chronological Survey" shows the course of events in the New Testament in relationship to the political history of Rome and Palestine.

The book is attractively printed and contains a fine variety of illustrations, carefully selected to help the reader. Most of the pictures in color are Providence prints. There are also useful charts and maps.

For use in schools, confirmation classes and homes this book is heartily recommended.

R. A. VOGELEY

Prayer and the Lord's Prayer. By Charles Gore. Harper and Brothers. 124 pages. $1.25.

This little volume, written nearly half a century ago by the late Bishop of Oxford, is as relevant today as when it first appeared. The author gives us an insight into the true nature of prayer, and how a Christian ought to pray. It is probably as concise an explanation of the Lord's Prayer as has ever appeared in print. E. E. R.

Jeremiah for Today. By Harry F. Baughman. Muhlenberg Press. 221 pages. $2.75.

Here Jeremiah is made to speak as a contemporary, with a series of messages pertinent to the problems of today. The book is well written and worthy of the attention of any person who desires to study Jeremiah or who is looking for further light from the Bible on such subjects as the nature of God, the problem of suffering, and the source of spiritual power.

J. V. N.

Personal Religion. By H. C. Alleman. Muhlenberg Press. 124 pages. $1.75.

The author is one of the most distinguished Lutheran scholars of our day. The twenty-four meditations in this volume were given as chapel talks at Gettysburg College, and therefore seek to meet the spiritual questions that occupy the thoughts of serious-minded folk in our day. As a challenge to a deeper spiritual life and a closer walk with God, they deserve wide reading. The world is sorely in need of more vital religion in our day.

A. L. L.

"The best things are nearest: light in your eyes, flowers at your feet, duties at your hand, the path of God just before you. Then do not grasp at the stars, but do life's common work as it comes, certain that daily duties and daily bread are the sweetest things in life."

T. L. Cuyler.

"Some people, once they adopt an idea, bury it in the ground and go on the rest of their lives defending it, without ever re-examining it to see whether time and the elements have caused it to decay into a worthless handful of dust. In that way you can always be consistent—and often wrong.

Raymond Clapper
in "Watching the World."